

Catholic Theatre Conference

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No. 10

President - Walter Bamberger

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TRAPP FAMILY VISITS ALVERNIA

That Alvernia High School's production of ONE FAMILY SINGS was a success was obvious for many reasons. The play, based on the life of the famous Trapp family, was written by Sister Francis Borgia and produced recently for the first time at Chicago's Alvernia High School under the direction of Anna Helen Reuter. At the matinee for the Sisters there were thirteen hundred in the audience, while opening night was sparked by the presence of the Trapps themselves who had made a special trip to Chicago to be present for the premiere. The Trapps apparently were very pleased with the show as were representatives of Row Peterson Publishing Co. who made a bid for the publication rights.

OHIO SESQUICENTENNIAL

In connection with the celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the state of Ohio, the Chancery Office asked that the Catholic schools give a public demonstration of some kind to show the contribution which they have made. In response to this request the School of the Brown County Ursulines, St. Martin, Ohio, presented JULIA CHATFIELD, a dramatic portrait drawn from the diaries and letters of the eleven foundresses of the Brown County Convent.

The script, written by Sister Miriam and first produced at St. Martin in 1945, calls for a cast of one hundred and eleven. Since the play this year was presented in Cincinnati, forty miles from St. Martin, it was no small task to transport the entire school as well as sets, props, etc., for the final production. But according to the report received here, it was well worth the effort.

One of the most gratifying results of the production was the increased interest and enjoyment of verse choir among the

students. The choir, which included children from sixth grade through high school, was used to form the liaison between the state, the diocese and the school in the telling of the story. The participants in the choir had the feeling of having made a real contribution to the production as a whole. And obviously the rest of the students enjoyed it since, after the production, the graduating class requested that verse choir be included at their graduation exercises.

Proceeds of the show went to Archbishop Alter's Fund for restoring the Church of St. Peter-in-Chains to Cincinnati's Cathedral Church.

THANKS TO A.D.C.

Our warmest thanks to Brother Celestine, F.S.C. and members of the Archdiocesan Dramatics Council of Los Angeles for their generous check which was recently sent us. In a letter which we received from Brother Celestine, chairman of A.D.C., he explained, "We think that this surplus money accruing from our last play festival will be of more value to the national group than it would be to us locally." All our thanks and gratitude for this very welcome assistance.

SUMMER THEATRE INSTITUTE

Clarke College Department of Drama has announced that the College is offering a Theatre Institute for High School students and a Summer Play Production Workshop for teachers. The Institute, designed for junior and senior high school students, will include courses in acting, make-up, radio, and oral interpretation. Members of the High School Institute will take part in plays directed by the teachers in the Play Production Workshop.

THE PRODUCTION CALENDAR

Sec. 34.66, P. L. & R.

The Teachers' Production Workshop will offer lectures, discussions, demonstrations in play directing, costuming, make-up, lighting, choosing the play, scenery planning, as well as laboratory productions of one-act plays, arena productions, radio dramas, book-in-hand, and proscenium plays. The summer sessions will commence June 29th and terminate August 5th. Applications will be accepted through June 15th.

ARENA THEATRE CONFERENCE

The first annual Arena Theatre Conference, sponsored jointly by the University of Miami and the American National Theatre and Academy, was held last month. Edgar Klotten, formerly of Fordham University and member of CTC, was on the program and sent us a report. Said Mr. Klotten, the Conference was "the most stimulating and inspiring, yet downright practical meeting of theatre people" he had ever attended. In the five days over which the meetings stretched, innumerable phases of arena production were discussed, from "Aesthetics of Arena Theatre Production" to "Building an Arena Theatre". All of the remarks were taped and Sam Hirsch of the University of Miami hopes to collate and edit the material into a handbook on Arena Theatre.

LIBRARY ADDITIONS

Since the printing of the list of our library selections, the following scripts have been added:

NO GREATER LOVE	Fisher	Art
Crafts	2 M 3 W	
BRIEF MUSIC	Lavery	French
7 W		
THE LITTLE DOG LAUGHED	Tarpley	
Row Peterson	5 M 10 W	
NINE GIRLS	Pettitt	Dramatic
Pub. Co.	10 W	

CROSS COUNTRY CIRCUIT

High Schools

On May 10 and 11 the Senior Class of St. Augustine High, Austin, Minnesota, presented a three-act mystery drama entitled *STRANGER WALKS THE NIGHT*. The play was written and directed by Mr. Martin Crowe. Other productions of the year at St. Augustine's were *THE GONDOLIERS*, *THE VIOLIN MAKER OF CREMONA*, *THE GHOST OF A SHOW*, and *SUBMERGED*. The latter were under the direction of Sister M. Baylon.

The Dramatic Club of St. Joseph Academy, Sprague, Washington, used as its spring production *SINISTER HOUSE*. The play, a melodrama in three acts, is by Taggart and written for an all female cast. Sister M. Loyola, director, calls it "an excellent play".

On the May agenda at McDonell High, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, were a series of one acts. The students recently did the last scene from Maxwell Anderson's *MARY OF SCOTLAND* as their entry in the La Cross Catholic Play Festival. Sister M. Susan is director at McDonell.

Mercy High School in Chicago recently offered *SONG AT THE SCAFFOLD* under the direction of Mary Synon, while Jo Anne Logelin, directed St. Scholastica students in their production of *LADIES IN RETIREMENT*.

For their spring production the Longwood Players of the Academy of Our Lady went Scotch and gave a sprightly performance of the popular musical comedy, *BRIGADOON*. Students from St. Leo, St. Mel, and DeLaSalle High Schools took part in the production as well as the Longwood Players. Colorful kilts, argyles, and claymores were created especially for the show. Sets and costumes were designed by Therese M. Cuny, director. Assisting Miss Cuny was Sister M. Vianney, with the aid of the women's auxiliary who sewed costumes.

For the Senior Class play at Dominican High School, Galveston, Texas, Sister Mary Paul chose Mel Dinelli's *SHUBERT ALLEY*.

Drama students at Immaculata High School, Chicago, combined their efforts with the Glee Club and Orchestra this month to present two choral readings, *LONG JAUNT TO JORDAN* and *SUSIE*, *THE LITTLE BLUE COUPE*. Helen Reuter directed the verse choir.

FATHER WAS A HOUSEWIFE was the April production at St. Michael's High School, Chicago. Director, Mary Beecher, said the students enjoyed working on the show which had a good deal of music in it. To finish up the year's series of one act productions, the underclassmen of the drama department gave *GHOST OF A FRESHMAN* and the upperclassmen presented *BEWARE OF TERMITES*. Students at St. Michael's are never lacking in a lively competitive spirit where their drama activities are concerned since Miss Beecher introduced the "point system". Each year a St. Genesius medal is presented to the student in the upper division and the student in the lower division having the highest number of points for work done in connection with productions throughout the year.

LADIES' LOUNGE was the spring full-length production at Josephinum High School. Among the one acts which the students did throughout the year were *THURSDAYS AT HOME*, *BE A LITTLE CUCKOO*, and *HOLLYWOOD CAN WAIT*.

Good Counsel High School also finished a series of one act plays this month with *DRUMS IN THE NIGHT*, *LUCKY DAY*, and *THE CASE OF THE WEIRD SISTERS*. For their April full length show they did *SHUBERT ALLEY*. Miss Beecher is director at Good Counsel and Josephinum High Schools.

For their final production of the season, the Blackfriars of Dayton, Ohio, gave George Batson's *DANGEROUS NAN MCGREW*. Mr. John Weaver is director of the Blackfriars.

Colleges & Universities

Under the direction of Frank Hanley, Mt. St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, recently presented the three act comedy, *PEG O' MY HEART*.

George Bernard Shaw was the theatre fare at Marymount College, Salina, Kansas, during the month of April. The dramatics club gave two performances of *HEART-BREAK HOUSE*. Said Sister Michael Ann, C.S.J., "It was a real challenge to the players, but they accepted it and did a very good job."

Chicago's Loyola University Theatre recently gave three performances of *TAKE THE KEY*, a new musical written by Roslyn Rosen and John Downey. The show was directed by John Bettenbender; choreography was by Charles Bockman.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST was a recent production at the College of New Rochelle, New York, sustaining member of CTC. The production was under the direction of Edgar Kloten. Sister Mary Margaret, O.S.U., is head of the College's department of drama.

De Paul University will close its season this year with Ivor Novello's *FRESH FIELDS*. David Itkin, director, said he chose the British comedy in order to round out the year's program which has included productions of *TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA*, *THE SWAN*, and *HAMLET*.

Helen Coyle, director at Mary Manse College, Toledo, reports that the College's latest full length production was *THE HEIRESS*. This completed a year of activity which included a series of one act plays - *TO STRONG THINGS*, *EVENING AT HOME*, and a Christmas miracle play.

George Batson's *RAMSHACKLE INN* was the April production of the Clarke College Players. The play was under the direction of Frederic Syburg while Sister M. Xavier, BVM acted as technical director.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

A correction in our membership directory: an error was made in listing the drama director at St. Joseph Academy, Cleveland, Ohio. The present director at the Academy is Sister Margaret. Please make this change in your directory. Also we have a new member to add to our list of members. As of last month we were happy to welcome to the Conference as a sustaining member Father Peyton's *FAMILY THEATRE*.

If you have noticed any errors or omissions in the directory, please call it to our attention so that we may make the necessary changes. Also, in connection with this, may we ask that whenever you renew your membership, let your central office know exactly how you would like to be listed in the directory. Some people carry personal memberships while others carry their memberships in the names of their school or community group. We cannot be sure how you would prefer to be listed unless you let us know.

PLEASE - and - THANK YOU

Thanks to Mr. Ted DeLay of Loyola University, L.A., for loaning us his director's copy of *EVERYMAN* in response to a request which we made a few issues ago. Floor plans, costume sketches, and stage directions are quite detailed. The production, as planned by Dr. DeLay, is designed for arena staging.

Thanks also to Sister M. Genevieve, OP, Bishop Byrne High School, for her contribution of three copies of *NOGREATER LOVE*.

Several requests have been coming in for information on plays for all-Sister casts. Your Service Bureau is not giving much service on this score since we are ignorant of good sources for such material. If you have any ideas which might prove helpful to the next person to solicit

our aid, *please* forward them to the Service Bureau.

PLAYWRITING CONTEST

June 15th is the deadline for manuscripts to be entered in the One-Act Playwriting Contest being sponsored jointly by the Chicago Drama Festival and CTC. The contest is open to all high school Conference members in the Chicago area. A board of judges chosen from CTC members in various parts of the country will evaluate the students' scripts and the winning play will be presented by a hand-picked cast at the 1953 Chicago Drama Festival in the fall. In addition, the author of the winning play will be awarded a \$25.00 savings bond.

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"One of the finest plays for high school people yet published, and so typical in every way."—PHYLLIS STORCH, Dir., Chittenango, New York.

"Audiences stopped the show many times to laugh and applaud. Underneath the comedy, there were many good lessons for parents, teachers and students."—MARY G. ERNST, Dir., Thomson, Illinois.

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